Strange and Wonderful NEWS from *Ratcliffe*:

Being a Sad but True RELATION of the

Apparition of two Spirits,

VIZ.

An Antient Gentlewoman and Her Daughter;

Which Occasions the PRESENT

Confusions and Disturbances,

IN

The House by Ratcliff-Cross.

Which happen'd (as is really believed) by the Fatal Rashness of the Husband of the said Daughter, who unhappily Wisht, *That the Souls of neither the Mother, nor the Young Woman his Wife, might ever obtain Rest in the other World*, till he was really Satisfied, whether he was not cheated of almost an *Hundred* Guineys, which he supposed was left for him in the Hands of the Nurse, by his said Wife: Whose Spirits appeared that very Night the *Rash Wish* was made; with an Account of the Manner of Their First Appearance, Their Different Shapes, and the Words that were heard uttered by them Both, on several Occasions.

Licensed October 23. 1690. And Entred according to Order.

29. Oct. 1690.

THE *Atheists* and *Sadducees* of this Age, like some of the Antient Heathens, have thought it a great piece of Wit to deny the Being of Spirits, and that all Stories concerning them are either fabulous or to be ascribed to Natural Causes, which fond opinion many Learned men have sufficiently confuted, and as the examples of former Ages and Places, so the prodigious accidents that have happened in our times, not only in this City and Nation, but in most other Parts of the known World, make it manifest beyond contradiction, that there are *Dæmons* & *Spectrums* infesting this lower World, besides the evidence of Scripture, which is fully convictive to all sober Christians; Tho' yet it must be granted, the power of God doth so limit and restrain their malice, that they can hurt no man, nor any other creature, much less any that worship Him in truth, without permission from Him, who is God over all the Earth.

As it is a Truth among Sober men beyond Controversy, That Spirits have some times really, as well as imaginarily appeared to Mortals in the World, so we may rationally conclude from St. *Luke*, that such things were of old taken

notice of, *Luke* 24. 37. where it is ſaid, The Diſciples were terrified and affrighted, and ſuppoſed they had ſeen a Spirit; And it is obſervable, that ſuch frightful *Spectters* do moſt frequently ſhew themſelves in places where the Goſpel is not Preached, and therefore the *Dæmons* did generally inſeſt the *Gentiles* and Heathens of old, as alſo the *Eaſt* and *Weſt-Indies* of latter times, of which we have many inſtances related by credible Hiſtorians.

It would here be both tedious and impertiment to anſwer all that witty men may object againſt the truth of the moſt obvious Opinion, and therefore I ſhall ſay no more in confutation of the common quarrels raiſed by ſuch Perſons upon this Subject, but relate you matter of fact, as it hath lately Occur'd.

One Mr. *Sn.* living in *Ratcliffe* near the *Croſs*, about nine Months ſince married the Daughter of a Wealthy Old Widow, who lived in the Neighbourhood; ſome time after the Marriage the Mother dyes, about a Month ago the Daughter, Wife to Mr. *Sn.* dyes likewiſe, who upon her Death-bed delivers to the Nurſe (who was her Confident) privately, the Juſt Sum, as the Nurſe Affirms, of 12 Guinnies, to Deliver to her aforeſaid Husband, as ſoon as ſhe was Dead, according to which will and deſire of the Deceaſed, the day after She departed, the Nurſe gives the Maſter an account of the Will of her Miſtriſs, and Delivers him the 12 Guinnies, upon which Mr. *Sn.* a few Dayes after communicating what had paſſed to ſome of the Neighbours that were of his Wives particuler acquaintance, they perſwade him that the Nurſe had cheated him, and that his Wife had an *Hundred* Guinnies by her, that was left her by the Mother, who having a Spice of the Old Womans Temper, had kept them by her unknown to him, for fear of coming to want, this account ſo Enraged Mr. *Sn.* that when he came home, charging the Nurſe with fraud, and ſhe denying it, alledging, that the 12 Guinnies were all that her Miſtriſs gave her, He fell into a great Paſſion, and prayed to God that the Souls of his Wife and her Mother might never reſt, until he knew the Truth of it from them, and the very ſame Night, Mr. *Sn.* with his Apprentice and a Maid-ſervant, being in the Kitchin, between the hours of eight and nine all very merry and chearful, and juſt ſitting down to Supper, the Apprentice found a ſtrange impreſs upon his Spirits, with a panick fear at his Heart, inſomuch, that his countenance changed, which his Maſter perceiving, asked him what made him look ſo on a ſudain, who replied, That he found himſelf a little Illiſh, and turning his Head towards the Buttery door, where hung the Towel; he ſaw the plain ſhape or reſemblance of his Miſtreſs in her uſual Houſe-dreſs, looking over her ſhoulder, and laughing, rubbing her hands with the Towel; the Apprentices Eyes were fixed on his Late Miſtreſs for a conſiderable time, having no Power to turn his head, or take his Eye off from the aforeſaid place, which the Maſter perceiving, asked him, *What he ſtared at*, which words he had no ſooner ſpoke, but he fancied, that he ſaw ſome ſtrange appearances himſelf (but neither himſelf nor Maid-ſervant, ſaw the ſhape of the Miſtriſs) upon which, crying out with aloud voice, *that if there were any Devils or*

Spirit

Spirits there, they ſhould come out, or words to that effect ; upon which there appeared to them the plain reſemblance of a great black *Dog* walking about the Room, at which moment the Apprentice loſt the ſight of his Miſtreſs, the Maſter, as well as ſervants being in a great Conſternation, immediately hurries up Stairs to Bed, leaving the victuals upon the Table untouch'd, the Maſter and Man lying together, and the Maid in the next Room to them on the ſame floor, this Night they heard great knockings and jumblings, both in the Garrets and below Stairs, but ſaw nothing more. The next Night, they being all juſt gone to Bed, in manner as aforeſaid, but the Candles not being out, there appears to the Maid in her Chamber, the Apparition of the Mother, in her *Hat*, *Waſtcoat*, *Petticoat*, &c. juſt as ſhe uſually went in her Life time, demanding of the Maid where *Tom* was, the uſual name ſhe called Mr. *Sn.* by in her Life time, at the ſame time the Maid, as well as the Maſter and Man, heard a knocking at the Maſters Chamber door, crying out, *Where is Thomas* ? the uſual name the Daughter called Mr. *Sn.* her Husband by, in her Life time ; but at this time none of them had power to ſpeak to the Apparition. Another Night, between the hours of eleven and twelve, a great Noiſe was heard in the Garrets, and then rumbling down the Stairs, as if ſome barrels of Lead or Iron, or ſeveral Hundred pound Weights were coming from thence, after which, the Maids door flew open, and the Apparition of the Old Woman entred, demanding, where *Tom* was ? which the Maid not readily anſwering, but crying out, the Bed-cloaths were immediately pulled from her, and ſhe felt two hands very cold, graſping her about the Waſt, and then pulled her out of the Bed on the floor, dragging her about the Room ; the Spirit then threatened, that unleſs ſhe would ſhew the place where *Tom* was, ſhe would throw her out at Window ; the Maid made a moſt hidious out-cry of Murther, &c. which affrighted, and raiſed moſt of the Neighbourhood in the ſtreet, the Maid offered to direct the Spirit to the Chamber door, where the Maſter lay ; by this time the Apprentice had gotten up, and called to the Maid, and immediately the chamber door, where the Maſter and Man lay, opened of it ſelf, and the Apprentice eſpying the Maid ſtanding in her ſhift at the door, asked her to come in, and tell them what had occurred, the Maid replied, *She could not ſtir, for that ſome inviſible thing held her faſt round the Waſt, with Hands all feeling like bone, and fingers like Iron or Steel, and would not ſuffer her to ſtir further than juſt the entrance at the Door*, but at that time neither the Apprentice nor Maid Servant could perceive any Human ſhape, only the Maid felt the ſtrength and Power of the inviſible hands that kept her from entring the Room; all this while the Maſter lay juſt by in Bed, and had not Power or Courage to ſtir ; but the Apprentice took Heart, and demanded, in the Name of the *Bleſſed Trinity*, what the Spirits would have, or why they came to diſturb them ? but no anſwer was made. In the Room where the Maſter and the Apprentice lyeth hath been great diſturbance likewiſe, the Bolſter and Pillow has been lifted up with their

heads above a foot from the Place, great knockings at the Beds-Head and ſcratchings under it, likewiſe an *Eaſt-India* Cabbinet, that lay near the Bed, upon a Cheſt of Drawers, was ſeen of it ſelf to move from the Place, to the other end of the Room, the Chairs and Stools clattering and tumbling together all Night long; and the next Morning, all ſtanding in their exact places, as they were left overnight, this for ſeveral nights together; and ſince there has been heard the like noiſe of the Chairs and Stools, and the next Morning they have been found in the Room all in Confuſſion; when the *Apparitions* have vaniſhed, or theſe noiſes ceaſed, immediately an hollow blowing or ſhivering Wind has enſued.

The foregoing *Narrative* is ſo extraordinary remarkable, eſpecially that concerning the Wench, that it may well ſeem plainly beyond the power of *Humane Wit*, or the *Laws of Modeſty*, Poſſitively to determine any thing therein, notwithſtanding both the Apprentice and Maid Servant are ready and willing to give it upon Oath, to the Truth of what is here related; for the Truth is, the World has been of late years ſo much impoſed on, by Relations of this kind, that they generally meet with the fate of Common Lyers, who are not believed even when they ſpake the Truth.

Why Spirits do ſo ſeldom now a days appear, eſpecially thoſe that are good; Whether it be not the wickedneſs of the preſent age, or the general prejudice men have againſt all Spirits that appear, which they ſtraight way declare to be Devils; Or whether it ariſe from the frailty of Human Nature, that is not uſually able to bear the Appearance of a Spirit no more than other Animals are; for into what Agonies *Horſes* and *Dogs* are caſt upon their approach, is very well known to moſt that have read Relations of this nature, and which is a good Circumſtance to diſtinguiſh a *Real Apparition* from our own Fancies and Imaginations, which theſe Creatures are not capable of? Or, *Laſtly*, Whether it be the condition of *Spirits* themſelves, who it may be without ſome violence done to their own Natures, cannot become viſible, it happily being as troubleſome to them to continue Viſible for ſome time, as it is for men that Dive, to hold their Breath in the Water? yet it does not follow from hence, that there are no ſuch Appearances, though ſome, it may be, will not Believe it, becauſe they themſelves never ſaw any; for that can be no Evidence, that they are not extant in Nature, ſince every Man hath a reaſonable Soul in himſelf, which is an Immortal Living Spirit; and yet none ever ſaw it forſaking its Habitation, and leaving the Body.

And to confirm the aforeſaid Relation, we might here Subjoyn an undeniable Teſtimony of a late *Apparition*, which diſcovered a moſt Barbarous Murther, committed by *William Barwick*, upon the Body of his own Wife; for which, the *Criminal* was juſtly Executed, being Tryed, and Convicted, before the Honourable Sir *John Powel*, Knight, one of His Majeſties Juſtices at the *Aſſizes*, holden at *York*, on *Sept.* 16. 1690. But a large Account of it being lately *Publiſhed by Authority*, we refer the *Reader* to the ſame.

FINIS.

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